



Ample stock and attractive displays feature Professional George Calderwood's pro shop at North Hills CC, Milwaukee, Wis., but George will tell you a schedule of events that attracts a steady traffic of play is the key to pro shop business.

Pull of Events Schedule All-Important to Club

By GEORGE CALDERWOOD

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Before many shots are fired on the courses in the northern and central states each season the pro may have won or lost his battle for business.

The schedule of events at a club usually determines the extent of golf interest and play and when that schedule is being drawn up the pro must be helpful without being obtrusive in the planning. Men's and women's committees usually welcome advice on preparing a program that appeals to all the members and gives reasonable assurance of a wide distribution of the prizes. The pro, by keeping his eyes and ears open, learns of events that are successful at other clubs and which could be adopted in increasing competitive interest and pleasure at his own club.

Furthermore the pro probably knows better than any committee chairman or member just who is not participating in the events at the club and whose club patronage might be built if the competitive program provided some lively inducement.

At our club we have found that first, arrangement of a variety of events and second, appointment of a member "captain" to be in charge of each featured day's events for men or women, got the club pleasant building with competitive interest. This competition gives incentive for improvement of scores and every pro knows that the better the scores of the members the better business is in the pro shop and every department of the club.

This competitive program also is re-

flected happily in a record which our handicap chairman, John Haertel, compiles covering the year's play. Last year Haertel's summary showed that 247 members averaged 89.4 per round. That's a very fine showing for a good representative club in any metropolitan district.

The number of rounds played per year ranged from one to 70. Two members played 70 rounds each. Both of them averaged in the low 80s. Only three in our class B (11-14 inclusive, handicap) played as many as 50 rounds a year. Only five in the C class (15-18 inclusive) played 40 or more rounds last year. Average number of times played by all members was in the 20s.

Must Get More Play

North Hills is an active club with a great bunch of select and congenial members. But when I see the figures showing that 20 rounds played are considered pretty fair use of our splendid course, I am reminded that everything I can do to get a member to play more and use the club more represents an increase on the return on his investment in club membership. I realize, of course, that John Haertel's compilation does not present a complete picture, as many of the scores are not recorded for his use in getting up his data. But I never have met a handicap chairman at any club, or have learned of one from pros at other clubs, who is more thorough and persistent than our chairman in trying to get scores posted.

But always when I see our club's record of rounds played and lowest, highest and average scores, it is plain to me that the attraction of the schedule of events and the job that I try to do in helping the men's and women's committees realize their hopes, indicate what my chances for business in the pro shop will be.

My shop, I am confident, compares favorably in attractiveness and stock with that of any other first class club. And I know my members quite well. It is easy for me to be sincerely interested in their golf development and enjoyment because they are the sort of people a pro is bound to regard as real friends, and customers just to the extent that buying at my shop will contribute to their fun at golf.

But, regardless of the personal element, the key to pro department volume is the traffic that comes out to play. A pro can talk about general business conditions all he wants to but he winds up by finding that his sales are directly proportionate to the number of rounds played at his club. The factor of general business conditions doesn't adversely affect spending too much when you can get the people coming out to the course. When they're out there, they're not spending money someplace else for enjoyment. The country club really is

a bargain in high class entertainment if you can get the members coming out and playing enough to reduce their cost per round of membership cost down to a reasonable point.

At a great many metropolitan district private clubs the members are getting to the age when the physical conditioning of golf and the mental relaxation are more important now than ever before. Like almost every other professional who has a real personal interest in his members I see some of ours who are not playing enough. A week-end game is about all they play. For their own good they ought to be playing during the week; a couple of 9-hole sessions during the week would be good business and good medicine for them.

You are going to see more schedules of club events take consideration of that weekday afternoon or twilight golf. Of course, there's always the problem of prize expense, but that will have to be worked out on the same basis as any other business risks money for promotion expense.

There must be attention paid to getting the juniors into the program to have the whole family interested. The father-son, mother-daughter, father-daughter, mother-son events always are interesting and you can assure delight to members by having adult members who don't have sons or daughters "borrowing" youngsters for these events.

The ideal schedule is one in which every member of the club gets to play all other members, but since you can't get that get as many as possible of your members acquainted in friendly competition.

Chas. Hallowell On New Maintenance Task

Officials of the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents held a farewell luncheon at Merion GC, Ardmore, Pa., for Charles K. Hallowell, Philadelphia County Agricultural Extension representative. Hallowell is beginning a six months leave of absence from his duties with Penn. State College. He will travel through the southern states to California, making stops at various golf courses along the way. Tentative plans call for him to make a survey of turf conditions in California, in cooperation with Dr. Verne Stoutemyer of UCLA.

Guests present at the luncheon included Fred Grau, Director of the USGA Green Section; John Gallagher of UCLA and the Mascaro brothers of West Point Lawn Products. Gifts were presented to Mr. Hallowell in appreciation of his fine work with the turf maintenance men in the Philadelphia area.